

ABSTRACT

(Fig. 3)

The invention provides a method and apparatus for
5 providing hitless protection switching in a synchronous
transmission system. A switching apparatus is arranged to
receive data signals on at least two transmission paths
and to output data from a selected one of said
transmission paths. The apparatus is arranged to align
10 the respective received data signals so that a selector
mechanism can select between corresponding elements of the
received data signals. This arrangement allows hitless
switching to be performed since there is no loss or
repetition of signal elements when switching occurs. In a
15 preferred embodiment, data in respect of each frame of
each data signal is stored and the selector mechanism
selects between paths on a frame-by-frame basis by
comparing quality information carried by the data signals.
This arrangement offers a very low end to end Bit Error
20 Rate (BER) performance.